



**Written Testimony Supporting Bill
15-23, Landlord-Tenant Relations -
Anti Rent Gouging Protections**

March 20, 2023

Position: **SUPPORT**

Bill 15-23, Landlord-Tenant Relations - Anti Rent Gouging Protections

My name is Carlos Orbe. I am the Public Affairs Specialist for Maryland Latinos Unidos (MLU), an association housed at MD Nonprofits of over 300 Latino community leaders, business owners, and Latino-led nonprofits. MLU's mission is to unify efforts across the state to advocate and organize for the benefit of Maryland's Latino community. Our vision is that the Latino community in Maryland thrives, achieves excellence, innovates, and continually makes progress economically, socially, and environmentally. We utilize data-driven and evidence-based approaches to build coalitions to advocate and create a space for every Latino to have a voice. In doing so, we look to create or advocate for a network of resources to support Latino-initiated initiatives that positively impact the community overall. For these reasons, I am writing to express my support for the anti-rent gouging protection bill 15-23, led by Councilmembers Natali Fani-González, Andrew Friedson, Gabe Albornoz, Dawn Luedke, Marilyn Balcome and Sidney Katz.

Established in 2020, MLU has become one of the most involved non-profit organizations within Maryland's Latino community. From its inception and as a civil right, MLU's members have embraced the benefits of Anti-Rent Gouging and have advocated for its implementation across the State for the prosperity of at-risk and minority populations. Innovations through this bill add different tenant protection packages. Apart from a short period of time during the pandemic, historically the County has had no rent caps and most landlords currently have no restrictions regarding rent increases. This bill will add protections against abusive landlords and provides some stability and predictability against large and unexpected rent increases. Additionally, it seeks to provide understanding that Montgomery County must build more housing for people of every income level, this package is designed to avoid the negative effects on housing markets that strict rent control regimes have. This bill establishes a long-term permanent policy that is flexible enough to accommodate a wide variety of economic conditions, both up and down.

Maryland Latinos Unidos stands with Councilmembers Natali Fani-González, Andrew Friedson, Gabe Albornoz, Dawn Luedke, Marilyn Balcome and Sidney Katz. We believe affordable housing and anti-rent gouging practices should be among the top priorities in the State of MD. We request a favorable vote and the committee to consider expanding upon these necessary undertakings.

Respectfully,
Carlos Orbe, Jr.
Public Affairs Specialist
Maryland Latinos Unidos

Carlos Orbe Jr.